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## To Clarkies, It's the "Clark & Lewis" Expedition

"Clark on the Yellowstone," the four-day National Signature Event at Pompeys Pillar National Monument, commemorates the return trip of the Corps of Discovery. The return journey, especially William Clark's exploration of the Yellowstone River is largely ignored in popular accounts of the Expedition.

On July 25, 1806, Captain Clark and his party of 13 explorers, including Sacagawea, her husband Charbonneau and their son Jean Baptiste (whom Clark referred to fondly as his dancing boy "Pomp"), arrived at a large sandstone pillar located at the edge of the Yellowstone River. Clark carved the date and his initials in the stone and named the pillar for Pomp.

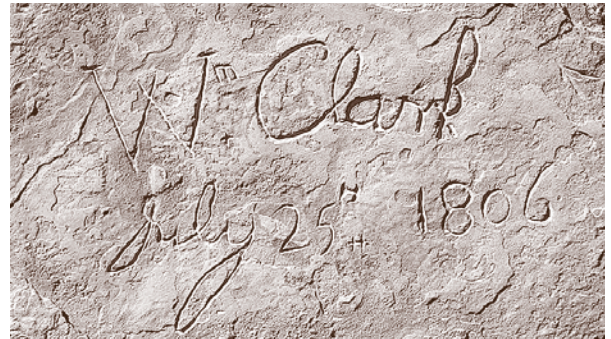


*Pompeys Pillar National Monument*

Two hundred years later, visitors to the Pillar will include a group of followers—historians, authors, young and old—who call themselves "Clarkies". Stephenie Ambrose Tubbs, who refers to herself a Clarkie, defines this person as "a Corps of Discovery enthusiast who is distinguished by his/her reverence for the leadership and character of William Clark over that of Meriwether Lewis. A Clarkie believes that William Clark was the glue who held the expedition together."

The Clarkies will have their day and say during a symposium. "Set in Stone: The Legacy of William Clark" on Sunday, July 23, 2006. An Author's Rendezvous will feature a tent where local, regional and national Lewis & Clark and Native American authors and historians talk about, autograph and sell their books.

Ambrose Tubbs is developing the Top Ten Indicators "You Know You're A Clarkie" that she intends to use during the symposium. "I hope to show how each panelist said something during their presentation that proves the point," said Ambrose Tubbs. "For example, you know you're a



*William Clark's signature on Pompeys Pillar National Monument*

Clarkie when you can spell the word Sioux 25 different ways, none of them correct."

"Clark on the Yellowstone" opens Saturday, July 22 at 10:30 a.m. with the dedication of the Pompeys Pillar Interpretative Center, and continues on Sunday, July 23 with the symposium set to begin at 2 p.m. Monday activities include a Native American symposium and the event concludes on Tuesday, July 25 with a National Day of Honor commemorating Clark's visit to the site located along the Yellowstone River just 28 miles east of Billings, Montana.

**Pompeys Pillar is in Montana's Custer Country near Billings. Visit [www.clarkontheyellowstone.com](http://www.clarkontheyellowstone.com) for additional information or email: [clarkevents@billingschamber.com](mailto:clarkevents@billingschamber.com). Call Robbie Carpenter or Melody Dobson, signature event coordinator, at 406.245.2111. For area information, go to [www.custer.visitmt.com](http://www.custer.visitmt.com) or [www.visitmt.com](http://www.visitmt.com).**

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# Beartooth Highway Reaches New Heights

**In May of 2005, devastating mudslides wiped out thirteen major sections of Beartooth Highway linking Red Lodge Montana and Yellowstone National Park, along with the summer travel season to Red Lodge and Cooke City.**

The damage, to say the least, was extensive, and many people thought it would take crews years to return the road to its lofty status as one of America's most-loved scenic drives.

But just five months later, the road reopened in the same travel season, beating even the most wildly optimistic predictions while coming in \$6 million under budget.

What? A highway project under budget and ahead of schedule? Crazy as it sounds, it only adds to the lore and lure of the road once called "the most beautiful drive in America" by Charles Kuralt, and designated a National Scenic Byway in 1989. The road reaches a dizzying 10,979 feet—nearly two miles above sea level—as it takes visitors to

the Northeast Entrance to Yellowstone National Park.

And, with the road set to open in Spring of 2006, interest is at an all-time high. The towns of Red Lodge and Cooke City are planning a multi-year campaign to let the public know the road is open again, and are capitalizing on the massive reconstruction effort as just one more reason to visit the area.

For instance, the effort required 92,000 cubic yards of excavation and nearly 50,000 labor hours. Crews installed 4,700 tons of asphalt paving, 15,000 square feet of rock retention wall, and 19,600 tons of road base. And, the road now has one more attraction of note: the largest debris fence in North America, designed to catch tumbling rocks.

In early 2006, the project engineers received an "Engineering Excellence" Award from the American Council of Engineering Companies. And with the road set to open in Spring of 2006 to locals and tourists eager to see the miraculous reconstruction, it's safe to say that's just the first of many accolades the road will garner this year.



*The Beartooth Highway*

**The Beartooth Highway is in Montana's Yellowstone Country, linking Red Lodge to the Northeast Entrance of Yellowstone National Park at Cooke City. Red Lodge is served by Logan International Airport in Billings. For more information, go to [www.redlodge.com](http://www.redlodge.com); for lodging and other area information, go to [www.yellowstone.visitmt.com](http://www.yellowstone.visitmt.com).**

## Train Ready to Run after a 50-Year Stop



*The Copper King Express excursion train*

In the 19th and 20th centuries, the cities of Butte and Anaconda grew to fame for their copper, partly due to the Butte, Anaconda & Pacific (B,A&P) railroad connecting Butte's copper mines to Anaconda's copper smelters. Now, 50 years after the last train carried passengers on the B,A&P, Rarus Railway is set to once again link the cities with its historic "Copper King Express" excursion train, making its maiden voyage Memorial Day weekend of 2006.

The train's four-hour, 52-mile round trip will take visitors through the stunning beauty of pine forests and wildlife in Durant Canyon—and through two centuries of history as it links the historic smelter in Anaconda with the Berkeley Pit in Butte. Passengers will be able to enjoy drinks and refreshments as they view the sites, and watch entertainment and interpretive presentations on the train's retro-fitted video monitors. Interpretive features include historic photos of sites

along the train's journey, as well as interviews with several miners and railroad workers relating their memories of the "Biggest Little Railroad in the World."

The train features two 100-seat passenger cars from Agence métropolitaine de transport, or AMT, the public railway system in Montreal Quebec. Rarus Railway (successor to B,A&P and operator of the Copper King Express) refurbished each of the cars, dubbing one "The Smelter City" in honor of Anaconda, and the other "The Mining City" in honor of Butte.

Tickets for the 2006 season are already selling on the web at [www.copperkingexpress.com](http://www.copperkingexpress.com) and Rarus Railway General Manager Paul McCarthy reports strong interest. "We have started to receive inquiries for class reunions, weddings and even company outings," he says. So, even though it's been half a century since passengers traveled from Butte to Anaconda via rail, this year, travelers will once again be able to heed the call of "All Aboard!"

**The Copper King Express Excursion Train runs between Anaconda and Butte in Montana's Gold West Country, served by Bert Mooney Airport in Butte. Visit [www.copperkingexpress.com](http://www.copperkingexpress.com) for more information, or [www.goldwest.visitmt.com](http://www.goldwest.visitmt.com) for lodging and other area information.**

# White Snow of Winter Brings Whitewater of Summer



*Whitewater rafting on the Middle Fork of the Flathead River in northwestern Montana*

**A continuous stream of winter storms blanketed the peaks and ridges of the Northern Rockies this year, bringing plenty of deep snow.**

That was good news for skiers, of course—and good news for rafters, because that means ideal conditions in late Spring and throughout the Summer. Several of Western Montana's rivers—including the North Fork and Middle Fork of the Flathead, the Lower Clark Fork and the Blackfoot—have earned reputations for producing big waves and whitewater thrills.

The North Fork and Middle Fork of the Flathead River produce a wonderful combination of adventure and scenic beauty right on the border of Glacier National Park. The Middle Fork features whitewater thrills with appropriately-named rapids such as Jaws, Pinball and Repeater. The North Fork forms the western border of the park and is widely-known for its spectacular scenery and watchable wildlife.

The Clark Fork River flows through a beautiful red-rock canyon in the famed Albion Gorge, creating Class III-V rapids. The 12 to 15 mile float is a

great day-trip for serious rafters in May-June. The river slows down to a more moderate pace during the months of July and August for fun family-oriented floats. Adrenaline junkies might be interested in riverboarding classes from area outfitters, which lets them strap on a helmet, wetsuit, life jacket and flippers to get up-close and personal with the whitewater.

A main tributary of the Clark Fork, the Blackfoot River carves a majestic valley north of Missoula, Montana. A calm trout stream most of the year, the Blackfoot takes on a completely new identity when fed by spring run-off in May and June.

For those who would rather watch the whitewater action than dive in themselves, the annual Bigfork Whitewater Festival comes to Bigfork May 27-28th. More than 200 competitors gather for a whitewater kayak

race on the "Wild Mile" of the Swan River, rated a class V rapid during the height of spring run-off.

The North and Middle Forks of the Flathead River, the Clark Fork River, the Blackfoot River and the Swan River are all in Montana's Glacier Country, served by airports in Missoula and Kalispell. For more information on rafting guides and outfitters in western Montana, visit [www.glacier.visitmt.com](http://www.glacier.visitmt.com).



*Adventure on Montana's rivers*

## Brushes, Birthdays and Birds

Missouri River Country is filled with plenty of interesting destinations, events and activities—and thanks to recent efforts it now has three more to add to the list: Brush Lake, Montana's newest state park; the town of Dagmar's centennial celebration, and the Northeast Montana Birding Trail.

Brush Lake, located in the midst of an expanse of wheat, is the latest addition to Montana's state park system. It was once a vibrant recreational area from the 1930s through the 1960s, complete with a dance pavilion, a restaurant and cabins—thanks in no small part to its beautiful deep, spring-fed emerald color. That color is due to high alkali content; that means no fish, but the spot is a recreational nirvana for sailing, wind surfing, flatwater kayaking, canoeing, scuba diving, water skiing and swimming.

Nearby, the town of Dagmar is celebrating its 100 Centennial this summer, July 8th and 9th. Dagmar began as a Danish Evangelical Lutheran settlement in 1906—and named in honor of the Danish Queen Dagmar. During the Centennial celebration, the town will honor its Danish heritage with events such as Danish Dancers and a Danish Olympics for kids.

Dagmar is also near one of the more than a dozen stops along the recently-established Northeastern Plains Birding Trail. Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge Complex, just a few miles from Dagmar, has 31,702 acres of grasslands and wetlands. It's designated as one of 500 globally important bird areas in the United States, and offers habitat for species such as sparrows, avocets, grouse, grebe, and pelicans. (The complete birding trail features a dozen stops. Log onto [nemontanabirdingtrail.org](http://nemontanabirdingtrail.org) for details.)

Of course, along with all those birds, humans are just as welcome in the area surrounding Brush Lake and Dagmar.

**Brush Lake, Dagmar and the Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge Complex are all in Montana's Missouri River Country. The nearest airports are in Great Falls and Billings. For more information, visit [www.fwp.gov.mt](http://www.fwp.gov.mt), [www.dagmarcentennial.com](http://www.dagmarcentennial.com), or [medicinelake.fws.gov](http://medicinelake.fws.gov). For lodging and other area information, go to [www.missouririver.visitmt.com](http://www.missouririver.visitmt.com).**





# Fort Benton Goes Down in History

**The history of Fort Benton is intertwined with the history of the American West; in fact, the town was at the very crossroads of America's westward expansion.**

So now it's only fitting, more than 150 years after the town's founding, that it's getting yet another historic attraction: the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument Interpretive Center, set to celebrate its grand opening on June 25, 2006.

The new monument, much like the town itself, has a story behind the history. Just



*Riverfront Park in Fort Benton*

getting to the grand opening has been a tale of several decades, starting back in 1975 when Montana Senator Lee Metcalf convinced Congress to designate a 150-mile stretch of the Missouri River (from Fort Benton to Kipp State Park) as "Wild and Scenic." The journey since then has been wild and scenic for Jack Lepley, Executive Director of the Rivers and Plains Society, the nonprofit group overseeing historic properties in Fort Benton. Lepley's been working to get the center open since day one in 1975, working through obstacles such as budget cutbacks and other delays. "I'm very happy this day has come," Lepley said at the Center's groundbreaking in 2005. "There were times that I wondered if I was going to live to see this done." Now, the grand opening will be even sweeter. The stunning design of the center mimics the soaring cliffs of the Missouri River Cliffs, with an unusual roof design and a white façade. Inside, the



*Front Street, Fort Benton*

center will offer displays detailing the Upper Missouri Breaks, including the activities of Lewis & Clark, who called the white cliffs "scenes of visionary enchantment."

The Interpretive Center will feel right at home in a town that's up close and personal with history. Established in 1846, it remains today the only 19th-century fort that's still a town. It was also a center for fur trade, a steamboat route, and even an important point along Chief Joseph's flight from the U.S. Army. (In fact, the town has recently been included as a site along the Nez Perce National Historical Trail).

Fort Benton is in Montana's Russell Country. The closest airport is in Great Falls. For more information, visit [www.fortbenton.com](http://www.fortbenton.com); for lodging and other area information, go to [www.russellcountry.visitmt.com](http://www.russellcountry.visitmt.com).

## Dude Ranchers Share Cowboy Way

**"When the enterprise that was to become known as dude ranching began, no one could have guessed the magnitude to which this popular vacation activity has grown."**

—From the book *Families That Take in Friends*.

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the Montana Dude Ranchers' Association, an organization whose mission is to promote the western ranch way of life and to share the ambience of Montana and its distinctive history.

Today, dude ranching is much the same as it was years ago. However, now the dudes are picked up at the airport or travel across country in their own "multi-horse" family vehicle.

Many guest ranches today exist simply because of "friends", usually from back east, who were invited to the western world of ranching just to visit, which usually lasted for weeks.

Today, a typical dude ranch visit is one week.

Experiencing the life on a ranch was an opportunity that just beckoned the world of guest ranching to be created. When entertaining became expensive families started to "charge" their guests.

The railroads actually played an important part of the success of early "dude" ranches. The railroad companies sent our brochures to entice the romantics to the wild.

As more ranches were established, the dude ranchers felt a need to meet and discuss how they could promote the business as a whole. In 1926, the group met at the Bozeman Hotel and set up rules that are still in effect today.

The opportunity to be part of the "romantic" portrayal of a cowboy out west continues today at Montana's diverse dude ranches.

**For more information on the Montana Dude Ranchers' Association and a list of ranches, visit [www.montanadra.com](http://www.montanadra.com).**

## FROM MONTANA

The diversity of events, places and people in Montana is almost as wide as the state itself. We hope to give you a taste of that diversity with this quarterly newsletter. In addition, the following services are offered to editors, writers and producers:

### Visual Materials

Color slides, digital images and stock video footage are available for editorial use.

### Writer/Photographer Referrals

We can put you in contact with many of Montana's most talented and experienced freelance writers and photographers.

### Editorial Copy/Calendar of Events

We can provide background information or editorial copy for many subjects. We also maintain a calendar of events for the entire state.

### Individual Attention

If you need the latest vacation guide and road map of Montana, a liaison with other government agencies or detailed information to fit a specific story angle, we're here to assist you.

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